



Randy CHITTO SCULPTOR



"Turtles are our story keepers. As long as our stories and songs are in them, we might dry up, but we'll still be there." - Randy Chitto

Randy Chitto grew up in Chicago, Illinois after relocating with his family in 1964 from the Choctaw reservation in Mississippi as part of the Indian Relocation Act of 1956. At an early age, he showed artistic talent which his family recognized as a gift and fully supported. In 1980, Randy enrolled at The Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) in Santa Fe. His main interest at the time was painting, but it was there he found clay, a medium he had previously not worked with. In 1983, he graduated with both a two- and three- Dimensional Degree in Studio Art. Since graduating from IAIA, Randy has worked as a clay artist.

All of his characters are well-known for their cheerful, animated expressions. The turtle, his primary subject, is considered the Choctaw story keepers and storytellers, shielding and protecting narratives under its shell until it is ready to share them. The storytellers are coiled-built and then finished with hand-burnishing. The bears represent the male facet of the tribe with their strength and courage. Like the turtle storytellers, the bears are also hand-built, but wet-sanded to add a high sheen.

An acclaimed artist, Randy's works are in numerous museum collections, including The Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona, The Denver Art Museum and The National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC, among many others. A past winner of the Southwestern Association for Indian Arts Fellowship and a Dubin Fellow at The School of American Research, Randy has accumulated many awards and distinctions throughout his career.

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